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THE

THIRD ESTATE

OF THE

SOUTH.

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FROM the beginning of the European settlement even to the present year of our Lord, the most prominent object of interest and observation in what we used to call the Southern States of this Republic has been the relation of the upper and under classes of southern society, — the slaveholding Anglo-Saxon and the lately emancipated negro. Not only abroad, but at home, it has scarcely entered into the calculations of statesmen and economists that a great change in southern affairs was impending that would bring another dominant class to the front. It was known that even in 1860 there were six million of white people in these southern states who had no immediate connection with slaveholding, and that a number of people, smaller than the present population of Boston, representing, possibly, a

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population of two million, comprised the ruling class. It was expected that this middle class would be felt in arresting the movement for secession in 1861. And I believe that a decided majority of these people had neither the desire nor intention of striking for a new nationality. But, with the exception of the action of West Virginia and the stubborn loyalty of the mountain populations of the central South, this expectation was disappointed. We met these people on the battle-field through four dismal years, where they earned a reputation for good fighting which has made the name of an American soldiery illustrious.

But now, like a mighty apparition across the southern horizon, has arisen this hope or portent of the South, — the Third Estate, — to challenge the authority of the old ruling class, and place itself where the "plain people" of every northern state was long ago established, as a decisive influence in public affairs. South Carolina, the head and front of the Old South, is now swept by a political revolution as radical as the emancipation of the slaves in 1865. Texas, where the old order never got complete foothold, is now passing under the same control, so easily that it is not half understood what weighty concerns are involved in the coming political movements of this growing state. Other states, especially on the Gulf, are rent by the same movement from below. It is evident that this is no surface or temporary affair. Its present political and financial theories will be largely modified by the rough discipline of responsible power. But the movement is in the line of American civilization, and, however checked or misdirected for the time, will finally prevail.

The wise observer of southern affairs will greatly mistake if he insists on the exclusive observation of the old conflict of races and the political condition of the negro. For the coming decade, the place to watch the South is in this movement of the rising Third Estate. What it demands and what it can achieve in political, social, and industrial affairs; what changes can be wrought in itself by the great uplifting forces of American civilization, — by education, including the influence of the family, the church, and the school, — on these things will depend the fate of this important section of our country for years to come. And on the outcome of this movement hangs the near future of the race question, — whether the swarming millions of colored citizens in these sixteen states will gradually reach their fit position in the body politic, or the whole South be plunged into the horrors of a race war, which will once more demand the strong arm of the nation to save that section from suicide.

The present essay — the Third Estate of the South — is an honest attempt to give my own opinions concerning this, one of the most important movements in the history of the Republic. The assumption of infallible wisdom and the ventilation of wholesale theories, North and South, in the discussion of southern affairs, is the misery of our public life. A virtual residence of ten years in this region, including all the sixteen states, with good opportunities for observation, has deepened the impression that, of all the social and civic puzzles that confront the American social scientist and statesman, no knot is so tangled, so difficult to be undone, so dangerous to be cut by the sword, as this. To-day the South, as a section, has passed into a permanent minority of sixteen of the forty-four states. But it is still possible to array these states again in a conflict that would inflict a wound on the southern member through which the Republic would bleed to death. It is "easy as preaching" to embroil and exasperate whole commonwealths, great classes and races, in a permanent misunderstanding that not even another Washington or Lincoln could reconcile. Even as concerns the South itself, the question is one of vital interest. The spectacle of the five hundred thousand white people of South Carolina split into hostile clans by a political campaign now foaming on the ragged reef of violence is inexpressibly painful and discouraging. I shall not try to deal with this question by the ambitious methods of grand analysis, abstract theorizing, or inflated prophecy. If I can cast a little side light upon this procession, as it moves on its twilight path, it may not be in vain that I occupy the time of the reader.

In the European sense, there never was a Southern aristocracy. The descendants of the few European families of the favored class who drifted to the colonies never had a perceptible influence after the War of

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the Revolution. The abolition of all special privileges reduced the superior colonial class to the condition of the leading class in a republic of white men. There was a social "upper ten," in the original southern Atlantic colonies, that held on indefinitely. But that largely disappeared, as a family affair, beyond the Alleghanies, where the new leading class made its way upward by personal power and solid service as certainly as in the northwestern states.

But, in the American political sense, there was and has been, up to the present time, a dominant class in this portion of the country more powerful for all the issues of public life than any order of nobility in Europe since the French Revolution. It was, primarily, a combination of landholders; practically, an aristocracy of the dollar. From the peculiar condition of the country and its monopoly of certain industrial products, the people of the South adopted and tied itself to the system of slave labor, cast off by the North as unprofitable, impolitic, and dangerous at the formation of the Republic. Whatever of anti-slavery sentiment — and there was a great deal — lingered in the early history of these states was swept down stream by the gathering tide of the dominating industrial and political interests. So it came to pass, in time, that a great combination of men, separated from each other by abysses of social, religious, and educational repulsions, found common cause in the protection of slavery in the old and its introduction to the new southern and southwestern states. The diaries and correspondence of Judge Story and John Quincy Adams, during their early years in Washington, are full of this observation of the formidable power of this combination, — its skilful handling of Congress, its invariable success in every conflict with a half-conscious and divided North.

And, without indorsing the exaggerated rhetoric of our southern college commencements concerning the splendor of this class during "the Golden Age" of southern society, we may grant to this combination the praise of remarkable ability and, on some lines, of broad foresight in national affairs. It was composed almost wholly of the ablest, most politic, and persistent class in modern history, — the British upper-middle class, — modified by the influences and interests of its peculiar position on the edge of Christendom. It made all things subordinate to the chief end of favoring the southern ambition to become the ruling power of the country. The professional classes became its spokesmen and allies. The leisure of its landed proprietors fostered a universal ambition among its young men for political activity as the be-all and end-all of life. Its schools were a reproduction of the British system of education a century ago, — universities, colleges, and academies for the upper white class, more completely under the administration of the Protestant clergy than the schools of Catholic Europe are now under the control of that astute priesthood, well adjusted to lift up the promising youth below to companionship with his betters, and elbow off the "common herd" into a wide-spread illiteracy. Its women, among the most brilliant and capable in the world, were no such tribe of imbeciles and idlers as we fancied in the North. The southern matron in her plantation life was one of the most overtaxed and devoted working women of her sex. Outside this domain female culture gravitated to the social ability which gave her the lead at Washington, and till a late period made her the nation's best social foot put foremost on the shores of Europe.

This political aristocracy, in all vital affairs, governed the Republic till it was moved to rise up and divide the nation in 1861. It instigated and brought on the condition of war against the Indians, Great Britain, and Mexico, by which the country was distracted through its first seventy years. It was the author of the magnificent scheme of the expansion of territory which gave us the empire of Louisiana, Florida, Texas, the Pacific Coast, — all the additions to our territory except the latest purchase, Alaska. It led in the settlement of the West, following the sagacious policy of Washington, whose eye was always glancing over to the wilderness beyond the Alleghanies. Tennessee and Kentucky were in a blaze of Indian border war, while the Northwest slumbered almost undisturbed.

It is difficult to understand why a class so able and astute in many ways was led on to the hazardous experiment of dividing the Union in 1860. With the Constitution on its side, with an indefinite power of Congressional obstruction, it could have kept slavery for a long generation, and made the country pay the cost of a modified system of emancipation. The reasons seem to be found in the absorption of a powerful society, engrossed in the work of self-preservation, in a strangely isolated position. Pushed off to the border of civilization, with only a half-barbarous Mexico and a boundless wilderness on the southwest, and a vast and lonely seaboard all around, shut off by its own theory and purpose from contact with the rising tide of progressive modern life, its literary, professional, and social influences all captured and held in subjection by the political intolerance which is the most unrelenting form of tyranny, it was not strange that its group of accomplished statesmen fell into the delusion, not only of their own sectional invincibility, but honestly believed that their political allies in the North would, in the last event, consent to their demand of virtual permanent control of the general government, or a separation on sectional lines. A distinguished citizen of Boston, during the summer preceding Mr. Lincoln's election, was for a time in daily confidential communication with Jefferson Davis. He reports that he found his distinguished acquaintance completely possessed with the idea of the military and civic superiority of the South, and the willingness of the dominant party in the North to consent to whatever it should demand.

How this came out we all know. The world has acknowledged the prodigious ability and matchless devotion with which the dominant class went through this desperate programme, to the terrible end of its own destruction. Its military commanders have furnished many forcible and picturesque and one noble figure to American history. Its statesmanship, now disparaged, was probably as competent as a cause so at odds with the trend of modern civilization would admit. But we do not yet recognize fairly the great services rendered to the South and the nation, later on, by this class, even in the demoralized state in which it was left by the war, when not one in ten of its families was found upon or has since stood on a solid financial footing. Its young men were scattered to the southwest, to the northwest, to the growing cities, leaving the open country in charge of a class that, in the old time, had little influence in affairs. Its women gathered up the wrecks of a great destruction, in true American style; and to-day the young women of the better sort of southern families are the hope of the country, rehabilitating the homes, the soul of the church, the best school-teachers, the leaders in the temperance reform, on the lookout for all industrial opportunities that can be used.

The leaders in the war naturally became the leaders of reconstruction politics. And, whatever may be the verdict of history concerning the way in which the eleven ex-Confederate states have been placed in line to receive a share of the progressive life of the country, the display of ability has fully borne out their old reputation. The South to-day owes about all it has of order and law, the common school for all classes and both races, the restoration of its religious and educational affairs, to the administration of this class. The great obstacle to the progress of the negro is not his old master class; for among these people are often found the wisest and most Christian views concerning the development of their old bondmen, and an amount of personal sacrifice and patience that only a constant observer can appreciate. I do not know what New Boston, with her five hundred thousand people, would do if suddenly overwhelmed by an avalanche of the seven hundred thousand South Carolina negroes, marshalled by our redoubtable friend, Gen. B. F. Butler, in a solid colored contingent, to capture the city government, administer its vast interests, handle its twenty million debt, and, in public affairs, represent it to the world. I fancy the "weight of the meeting" would there prevail, by some of the numerous methods by which an Anglo-Saxon community everywhere, in the end, manages to put inferiority on the back seat and land the management of vital affairs in the upper story.

But it was inevitable that this long lease of power by the southern dominant class should come to an end. In New England and New York, the aristocratic states of the old North, this change was gradually wrought, — by the educational influences that prepared the humbler classes, native or foreign born, for the responsibilities of power. Eighty-five per cent of the men worth a hundred thousand dollars or more, in these states, began with nothing but this outfit. But in the South the progress of the Third Estate has been slow: indeed, until the past twenty years, it had hardly begun. But all things hasten, even in the piney woods or mountain realms of our Southland; and now, under the simple name of a "Farmers' Alliance," this mighty army of the common people has been revealed, like a frowning mountain world uncovered by a rising mist. Already it may be predicted that the old order, as far as it depended on the European qualities of family and class training, has gone by. Hereafter, the South follows the North in the rush to the front of the fittest who survive. And the contest for place will be on industrial lines there as here.

For a time to come I believe the negro question is to be held in partial subordination by this great uprising of the Third Estate. To suppose that eight millions of citizens, in the condition of our southern negroes, twenty-five years out of personal slavery, can be wrenched from their present position and *shot* ahead of the twelve millions of plain white people who have been on the ground for two hundred years, and must become the dominant power of the South for generations to come, is only to indulge in the dream of an enthusiast. But whether the white man of the Third Estate can rid himself of the old theories of race and caste, and adopt the American idea that all men shall be fairly tested by what they can do, depends on many contingencies. Is it possible or probable, in a period sufficiently brief to avoid the danger of a disastrous race conflict, that this vast constituency can be brought over to the practical American view of giving to every child the great American chance in life? I do not know. But I greatly hope; and the sources of my hope, or some of them, I now declare.

When the history of the South descends from the realm of romance, where it still lingers, to the solid ground of fact, it will be seen how absurd everywhere outside the domain of legend is the impression of a radical difference between its original population and the old Northeast. Nobody pretends that the Southwest, beyond the Alleghanies, was peopled by a line of "gentler" descent than the Northwest. About all the South had to show in Revolutionary days of great statesmanship and eminent patriotism was, like the similar class in the North, a descent from the respectable middle estate of Great Britain. But, when we turn to the Third Estate, — always the majority, and now rising to the head and front of the new South, — we find the source of its power, as in the North, in the mixture of populations from a dozen sorts of vigorous European people. The Catholic Churchman and dissenting Englishman of various social degrees, the Scotch and North Irish Protestant, the early German of the valley of Virginia, the Huguenot of South Carolina, the Highlander, Hebrew, and other miscellany of old Georgia, the Creole, Frenchman, and Spaniard, in Louisiana, all went into the seething cauldron of the early colonial life. Up to a generation before the war came in a steady immigration of excellent people from New England and the middle states. I rarely visit a town in the five old Atlantic commomwealths that I do not find the descendants of these people, — always glad to renew the old-time associations with home. The accident of a change of residence alone prevented the Rhetts of South Carolina from being a Boston, and the latter Winthrops of Massachusetts a Charleston, family. Along with this uniformly good stock drifted in at an early date a baser element, brought to the colonies on indenture, — the lower sort of the English stock, whose descendants even now in Maryland and Delaware rank low in the social scale. The growing power of slavery intensified the separation of the respectable sort from the common lot. The illiteracy of whole regions of the country wrought its perfect work in the "poor white trash," — resembling the northern tramp, except that he is not only too shiftless to work, but too lazy to tramp.

How the strange population of the great central mountain world — near two millions at present — was formed nobody seems to know. This region was a mysterious "no-man's-land" till the enterprise of the last twenty-five years revealed it, with all its natural sublimity and beauty and its industrial importance, to an astonished world. Perhaps from the Revolutionary Tories of the adjacent states, from criminals, outcasts, eccentrics, and broken-down people in general, with a sprinkling of more ambitious blood, was made up that people which even now, seen among the mountains overlooking the valley of Virginia, but better observed in Eastern Kentucky, Tennessee, Western North Carolina, and Northern Georgia, sends forth a louder cry for the missionary of civilization than any portion of the Republic.

So far as variety of material is concerned, the old colonial South had an equal mixture of blood with the old North. Of late the trend of European immigration has not taken a Southern direction, and the per cent of foreign-born population in all the southern states east of the Mississippi is very small. A most interesting fact for the historical inquirer is the explanation of the origin of the southern white people, and the romance of the reality will eclipse the glamour of rhetorical mist in which the origin of this section has been involved.

So it has come about that the present population of this grade in the South is far more homogeneous than in the North. The rough training of the pioneer life welded these various elements into one people. Even the Louisiana Creole is yielding. A leading merchant of New Iberia, the heart of the Teche district, told me that twenty years ago only one in five of his country customers attempted to speak English; while now only one in five is compelled to trade in French. A brisk colony from the Northwest has invaded the prairies of Southwestern Louisiana; and a Congregational College, with a Yankee president, is established on the old domain of the Padres. Yet there are still great differences in education and efficiency in the different elements of this people. The coast country, including the immense piney woods empire, still produces a considerable population of a sort less hopeful than any other of whatsoever "previous condition." The lovely Piedmont region, surrounding the great central mountain realm of the old South, has a farming population greatly resembling the New England country people of my boyhood. The states beyond the Mississippi — Missouri, Western Arkansas, and Texas, the new Southwest — have received more immigration since the war than all the rest of the South: of the best and common sort of its own; somewhat from abroad; from the Northwest, whose people seem inclined to edge down into a milder clime; perhaps also a considerable return wave from the crowd that settled Southern Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana in by-gone days. It is said a million young men from the southern country districts have gone to the cities, the Northwest and the Southwest, since 1865. They have left on the ground, in some portions of the old South, a white population, so far as the men are concerned, inferior to the old-time occupants, — less capable of reclaiming the country, less inclined to deal fairly with the colored folk.

But it is almost hopeless to draw a diagram of the Southern Third Estate as it now exists. Nobody, even to the "manor born," can do it to the satisfaction of the southern people; for the pride of state, locality, sect, and social condition — what Mr. Breckenridge calls "the provincial flavor" — are "solid" against any decided estimate of matters so delicate. Before the war, lines were more sharply drawn. While alert to capture and lift up to companionship and position the rising talent of the lower class, the old-time ruling set drew hard and fast lines between themselves and the ordinary non-slaveholding people. My first experience of South Carolina was in 1856, — in a stage-coach bound for the Catskill Mountain House, New York, filled with a brilliant Charleston group, chiefly ladies. Completely ignoring my presence, the only man of the company entertained his fair companions all the way up by his adventures on a tour through the upper counties of "his nation," talking of the people there, amid peals of laughter, in a way that reminded one of Dr. Johnson and the *literati* of London a century ago, defining a Scotchman as "a good fellow, if caught early." Till the war, a property condition of representation in the South Carolina legislature gave a power to the lowland slaveholders which was used in a way that has come back to plague the commonwealth in the new upheaval of affairs.

The Civil War was the great university of the lower masses of the southern white people. The grand army caught them in its all-enclosing net; locked them up in its fierce conscription; marched them all over their own country, with occasional visits to Northland, outside and inside a Union prison camp. To a people so preternaturally eager to see and hear and talk, this was a godsend, — the beginning of the blessing that has come to the southern poor white man equally with his colored brother from the collapse of the Rebellion. The break-up of the old estates, especially in the Gulf region, brought large numbers of these people down to the lowlands as owners of farms. The opening up of Central Florida sent a wave of immigration from the piney woods people that still contests the northern and western occupation. The mighty development of the railroad system has remanded the coast country of the Atlantic and Gulf to a secondary place, and brought up the Piedmont region, in which a large number of thriving towns have arisen, and which, with the mining and timber lands, is the seat of the new southern prosperity. The new Southwest is growing almost as fast as the new Northwest, — an exception to the old South, outside of special districts.

The marvellous growth in the South, of which we hear so much, is largely a development of the mining country bordering the mountains, where a number of new towns have sprung up and capital is being invested; the lumber country and special agricultural districts. But much of the old landed realm is still in no condition to be rejoiced over. There are more people at work than of old, black and white. The division of farms has stimulated production. In certain quarters, skilled agriculture is taking the place of the old-time fumbling with the soil. New fields in Florida, Mississippi, and Texas are opening for the culture of cotton, fruits, "truck," and staples. The country people are living somewhat better than ten years ago. But the intolerable "lien system," whereby the town merchant practically owns the land and enslaves its occupants, is a dispensation such as afflicts no large body of civilized people besides in our country. How multitudes of good folk can live at all under such a systematic plunder is only accounted for by their moderate demands for living and the impossibility of getting out of the deadlock alive. The attempt of a class of southern politicians, in the interest of their pet economic theories, to compare the condition of this portion of their people with that of the farmers of New England and the established portion of the West, is simply ludicrous to an observer of the different portions of the country. More than half the people in whole regions of the South outside the better class in the cities are compelled to live in a way that is unknown in these states, except to the lower class of the foreign born, with little outlook for better times. But this country is capable of recuperation by capital, skill, and especially the occupation of small farms by industrious and thrifty people. In time, the better class of the negroes will come into possession of a great deal of this open country and reclaim it.

It would greatly change the northern estimate of southern affairs, could the fact be understood that confronts the traveller through the length and breadth of the Southland, — that through vast regions, even of the older states, the people are living under the conditions of a border civilization. Not a border country in the sense of our new western frontier, — a vanishing "out into the West," with a furious civilization, armed to the teeth with all the implements of modern progress on its heels. Not the terrible border life that railroad extension and the mining "boom" make in the new villages extemporized in a howling southern wilderness. Hundreds of these new towns in the South, where the iron horse reins up and the great steam leviathan wheels round, are a refuge for the drift and diabolism of the whole surrounding country, which appears regularly, on "dress parade," in the new city. One little metropolis of this sort in East Tennessee has enjoyed the luxury of a hundred murders since it was struck by the "boom." But this is the old-time border life, where people lived far away from each other and the world, with meagre privilege of travel, rarely used, the only town the county seat, and that not often visited. Here is developed an obstinate type of personal independence that stands out, like the iron handle of the town pump, in either sex. But what is not done that can be done in such a life? The man attends to his own little world; defends himself as best he can against wild creatures and wilder men; makes a sharp practical code of the neighborhood, that underlies the law of the land, and is administered far more thoroughly than the latter. These populations, once polarized by the plantation families, which made a centre of superior living, are now often left adrift by the decay of this class and the breaking up of the old order generally. The census of Virginia in 1880 showed not a quarter of a million of her people, even in villages. And, although the growth of what are called "cities" has been more marked during the past ten years, yet, outside of occasional districts, the vast majority of the southern white people live in an all-out-of-doors style, not easily understood in the crowded communities of the old East and large portions even of the new West.

While this sphere of life is favorable to some of the primitive virtues, — hospitality, good feeling, and sociability, — and to the absence of some of the vices of great cities, yet the dearth of the agencies of the higher civilization is a fact almost incredible, unless experienced. Even Texas, the most prosperous southern state, has yet no system of roads; and only three thousand of her eight thousand country schools have a school-house over their heads. The appalling loneliness of the vast "Lone Star" empire has already driven more than a third of its people into villages and cities. But in the older states, a full half of the people of both races live outside the opportunities for schooling, reading, churching, and the use of a tolerable press, — most of the modern agencies of social uplifting that are the commonplace of the North. The South, in winter, outside the towns, lies under a fearful embargo of mud, which shuts up the people to such a home life as can be enjoyed under the circumstances. The average country school does not last a full four months, is placed at inconvenient distances, often kept in an unfit school-house, — a peril to the health of the children of the poorer people. Less than sixty per cent of southern children in the open country, where three-fourths their whole number live, represents the average attendance on school less than four months in the year. Probably not a hundred "cities" of the South now have a free library, or a good circulating library accessible to the masses of the white people. The city daily journals have a limited circulation away from the towns and railroads; and the country press is too often, at best, feeble and misleading. Thousands of people do not read that, but depend upon common report for news. The significance of the Scripture phrase — "wars and rumors of war" — is apparent in a community largely dependent upon rumor and what the popular leaders choose to tell of public affairs. A considerable portion of middle-aged men are of the class that obtained little or no schooling during the war and the ten succeeding years, and have come up, a degenerate race from their parents, to shoulder the weighty responsibilities of the present. Here is the seat of the negrophobia that often blazes out into violence and outrage. It is not the deliberate purpose or feeling of the better class of the southern people, but the inevitable result of the friction between the races, where a considerable element of the dominant race is so removed from the higher influences of American life.

Yet the vast majority of this great population is of "native American" birth, and is all the time affected by the training-school of American life. The political speakers and preachers, the visit to the county town, the coming and going of the emigrating youth, the temperance agitation, the yearly revival meeting, the "boom," that is heard a great way off, like the thundering oncoming of the chariot of the sun, the awakening eagerness to make money, which Dr. Johnson pronounced "about the best thing an honest man can do," — all these influences keep the drowsiest realm somewhat astir, and form a sort of education to several millions of these people, — on the whole better than schools without common sense. Even the mountain world is stirred to its silent depths. Twenty-five years hence, the class of people described in Miss Murfree's novels may be as difficult to locate as the bison of the western prairies.

I rode a whole day, in South Carolina, with the son of an old Connecticut River railroad president, who was stumping the region along the line from Charleston, S.C., to the Ohio River, soliciting grants of money and land for the route that will give the shortest access to the ocean from the Northwest. A dozen great lines of travel are penetrating this marvellous wilderness, so long an enchanted land in the heart of the old Republic. In half a century, this section of mountain country will become one of the most attractive portions of the United States, — much of it more fit for occupation and agreeable in climate than a good deal of New England. These mountain people were loyal in the late war. Wherever the Union army penetrated, they fell in with *vim*. A hundred and forty thousand white soldiers were enlisted from this country, — twenty-four thousand more than from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Connecticut, seven thousand more than from nine of the present northwestern states. Eastern Kentucky gave more white soldiers to the Union army than its entire number of voters.

In short, the Third Estate of the South is chiefly of good original stock, though for two hundred years content to sit on the back seat and rise up at the call of a superior class. But that drama is well on toward the fifth act. Radically sound, good-natured, energetic, looking in with all its eyes at the great, wide-open front door of the new American life, with the first enjoyment of the common school and the hunger and thirst for more; hearing, afar off, the loud sound of the "forging ahead" of the grand new South, earnest and devout in religious faith, — here is a material for American citizenship such as nowhere else can be found in this world. We may well consider what a conservative force in national affairs is here in training, — only needing the education of the time to bring to the front a people that will close up with the best elements of the Republic and "hold the fort" of an Anglo-Saxon, progressive civilization against all raids from home or abroad.

What can be done by the whole country to aid in the evolution of this people in the Southland? How can this great uprising be so directed that justice will be done, — not only to its superior class, which it will gradually displace and reconstruct, but to the eight millions of colored folk alongside of which it must live?

The first condition of social advancement is an understanding of the favorable elements in the problem. Even the "less favored" of this great population, the higher strata of which are well up, have several characteristics that deserve mention.

First, this body of the southern people is not hopelessly committed to the fixed theories concerning government, social arrangements, and American affairs in general, which thirty years ago opened the "bloody chasm" we are all trying to fill up to-dav The exaggerated ideas of state sovereignty, the antiquated philosophy of eternal race distinction, the prejudice against modern ideas of education and industrial matters, which characterized the old leading class and still somewhat affect its rising generation, are not "to the manor born" with them. Indeed, a new state of the Union was formed in 1862 from the breaking out from these ideas by an important district of the Old Dominion. That the masses of the South have followed the leading exponents of these views, even through the destruction of civil war, is not decisive, since there had been little open discussion of such matters among them previous to 1860. But there are significant indications that, wherever the broader American ideas are fairly presented, without partisan or sectional animus, there will be found, in this quarter, a hearing that prophesies a hopeful future. The eagerness with which the country people have turned to the common school, — the special anathema of the old order in the old time, — and now for twenty years have supported it, bearing the chief burden of its colored department, almost to their full ability, and the constant demand for its improvement, is a case in point. Co-education of southern boys and girls has always been unpopular in respectable southern circles; but in the common schools it is well-nigh universal, and is now introduced in the state universities of three states. At the Miller Manual Labor School in Virginia, under the shadow of the university, four hundred youth of the humbler white class are schooled together, with a respect for womanhood worthy the higher ideal of the chivalry that interprets the Golden Rule. The special horror of the southern upper class is the education of the colored and white races together. But at Berea, on the edge of Old Blue Grass Kentucky, I found one of the best collegiate institutions of that state, where a large number of white mountain boys and girls were "improving their minds," and making manhood and womanhood, with a third as many lowland negroes, with absolutely no friction. Of course, the old-time notions concerning labor have passed out of sight of this, the rising industrial class of the South. I do not know what political policy or party in national affairs is to prevail in the future. But I am sure that another twenty years of fair opportunity to present the broad-gauge American idea of affairs to this people would result in a state of opinion that would leave the country safe, whatever party might dispense official "pie" at Washington.

Second, I believe in this people will be found a mine of enthusiastic and intelligent patriotism. The war against the Union was not an uprising of the southern masses, but a deliberate policy of the class that had its confidence, — never seriously contemplated by three-fourths of the Southern people. Once in, they fought, as American men always do when that is the business on hand. But, long before the bitter end, it was understood that the hearts of great numbers of the Confederate soldiery were no longer in the cause. I was informed by a distinguished gentleman in Richmond that months before the end, on a tour through the mountains of Virginia, he met great numbers of deserters and disaffected people who did not propose longer to fight for a cause that boded so little good for their kind. The non-slaveholding class has no such prejudice against the negro as the master class: indeed, this prejudice is far more a repulsion of caste and a memory of "previous condition" than a theory of race. They do not especially love the negro: the lower strata look upon him as a dangerous rival in many ways. But it will not need a miraculous conversion to convince them that the welfare of an American state consists in standing by equal rights, justice and fair play all round, leaving vexed questions of social import to regulate themselves, as they invariably will.

Third, another special trait that has attracted my attention from the first is the teachableness of the children of this class, with a reverence for superiors and confidence in those they believe friendly and unselfish. There is no better material than great numbers of these youth for the natural methods of teaching, which wake up the desire for improvement, spite of untrained manners and habits of living. I live among boys and girls who are making such efforts to gain a scrap of the opportunity so bountifully flung into the streets before all the children of our northern cities as makes this one of the most pathetic spectacles of American life. All the stories that have thrilled the churches of the North concerning the eagerness for knowledge of the young negro can be paralleled among the children and youth of the humbler white class, with the important difference that the average white child of Anglo-Saxon parentage, even of illiterate descent, seems to have at the bottom of his mind a pair of pincers by which he takes fast hold of what goes in, and generally reveals the power of heredity in a people for centuries the leaders of the progressive society of the world.

All these and other elements of hopefulness encourage the apostle of the new American life in his dealing with the most needy of this class, and insure the hearty co-operation of the upper strata. And, now, what can the North and the nation do to hasten the coming of this great uprising among twelve millions of white American people, on whose future relations to American ideas the fate of these great commonwealths depends?

First, it can aid, in all public and private ways, to put on the ground a good working system of country common schools, of at least six months' duration a year, where all children can receive the elements of education, with the moral and social discipline which is "half the battle" in the training for American citizenship. As fast as the simple elements of industrial training can be imparted, it will be well. But the great need of the Third Estate youngster of the South is a revival of brains that will open his eyes to the wide world outside the home lot and form a habit of good reading and sound thinking on what is ahead of him. That itself will be a great industrial uplift, and in time revolutionize the methods of unskilled labor, which are the chief hindrance to southern advancement in material things. I still hold to the deliberate opinion that the country people of the South are doing about all they can for their common schools. Special districts will be able to approach the cities and villages in their ability for local taxation. But for two hundred years the common people of the South have been taught that "taxation is tyranny," and that "economy," even pushed to public stinginess, is the ideal of good government. Even were this pestilent heresy exploded, and the people convinced that wise and generous taxation is the life-blood of republican society, —since, of all things, American civilization is the most expensive in the outlay, though the most economical in the income, — the power to bear taxation for putting on the ground the vast educational plant required for the white and colored schools, chiefly at the expense of the white population, burdened as at present, is not there. The persistent denial of this fact by a portion of the northern metropolitan press, in the interest of the land agents and the investors in southern capital, has gone far to publish a notion that Dr. Curry pronounces a "stupendous humbug."

To my mind, the defeat of the Senate bill for National Aid to Education, last winter, was such a mistake that, could it be fathered on either party, it would entitle that combination to a retirement from power for a quarter of a century, on the ground of political incapacity. No critic of New England, however malignant, has drawn a bill of impeachment of Yankee statesmanship so formidable as was furnished by the votes of five New England senators that accomplished that defeat, representing three states that lead the Union in the enjoyment of educational opportunities. A cause so manifestly just and wise and essential to southern progress as some form of national aid for the time needed to put the educational affairs of these commonwealths on their feet is sure to come up for renewed action. The bill of the venerable Senator Morrill, for additional aid to agricultural colleges, including those for colored people, which has passed both Houses of Congress, is fraught with positive good. These schools are among the most valuable in the South, especially for the youth of the poorer classes. With the re-enforcement of fifteen thousand to twenty-five thousand dollars a year, they can be greatly improved, becoming everywhere, as they have become in Mississippi and Texas, an important element in the movement for skilled labor for all people. A generous system of national aid for education, administered, as it could and would have been, by the state educational authorities, established at the close of the war, would have saved us from the bitter antagonisms awakened by the election bills of the present day. Said a radical politician to William H. Seward concerning the fugitive slave law, — one of the most mischievous ever enacted by Congress, — "What would you have done, as President of the United States, had that bill come up to you from Congress?" "If I had been President of the United States, that bill would never have reached the White House." The statesmanship that will save our country is that which works at long range, on the lines of the great uplifting agencies of civilization, in hope of gradual and permanent advancement, dispensing, as far as may be, with the old bungling rule of the sword and constable beyond the line of personal disobedience of the law.

Third, industrial education, in its broadest and most practical form, with good schooling in the elements of English, must become a great factor in the uplift of the new South. All the arguments used for its application to the negro have full application to the children and youth of the Third Estate. Especially is this true of the young women of this class. The lower forms of woman's work, with an increasing push into the operative and other modes of profitable labor, are falling into the hands of the colored women. Large numbers of these girls, in the excellent industrial mission schools of the South, are becoming successful workers in a variety of occupations for women. Whether the white girl of the South is to "lie off" and "play lady," while her colored sister "toils and spins," or take her part in the rising sphere of profitable industry, the three hundred and fifty ways by which an American woman can get a respectable living, is to be decided by this movement for the training of the hand of the rising womanhood of the South. Several of the southern states already admit girls to the agricultural colleges. But the Mississippi plan seems the most popular. This state supports a great industrial and Normal School, with free tuition for white girls, — a sort of college "of all work," where a young woman can get a good academical education and be trained for teaching while compelled to take some branch of industrial training. Though somewhat hindered by political interference in its administration, this school is becoming a positive success, and reflects great credit on a group of admirable women who pushed it through the legislature, and are still watching by its cradle. Georgia is about to establish a similar school at her old capital, Milledgeville. The plan is so feasible that I look to its establishment in all these states.

Bishop Atticus G. Haygood, the foremost educational and religious leader of the whole southern people, has inaugurated his elevation to a bishopric in the Methodist Church, South, by a wise and noble plan for a great school of a similar class for southern white girls, in the Alabama mining country, on the border between "down South" and the North, where the daughters of the impoverished rich and the ambitious poor can be educated at a rate that will enable thousands of good girls to obtain their great and only chance for education. The next million that goes down that way from northern benevolence should be given to Bishop Haygood, in whose hands the vanishing surplus of the United States treasury would have been wisely invested in "the building for the children" of the people of all conditions in these states. It is one of the delusions that still abide in too many minds that the great industrial need of the South is cheap and unskilled labor, the toil of an ignorant peasantry. The desperate need of the South is intelligent labor in the masses, under the leadership of trained commanders of industry,— an army that will go forth "conquering and to conquer," into this marvellous world of opportunity.

The white masses of the South need to be brought in range of that system of agencies of the higher American civilization now in operation even in the most remote Northwest, and which are the glory of the more prosperous states. It is impossible to describe the difference in the mental atmosphere in which a bright boy or girl, in an average county in South Carolina, Alabama, or Louisiana, is brought up, and that amid which his cousin lives, in Massachusetts, Ohio, or Wisconsin. It is all the difference between living in a country where the whole environment is educational, and a country where education is a special thing, and the youth is, all the time, compelled to push out of his ordinary surroundings to gain it. A free library in every neighborhood, a better class of newspapers, a movement to "add to faith knowledge" in the church,—all these, now rapidly coming to the front in the prosperous cities, still wait for their day in the open country. Yet here is the place, almost the only place left in American life, where is yet leisure from engrossing work. Oh. what a boon to us hurried and wearied mortals would be that precious leisure, flowing like a great quiet river through these rural districts of the Southland! Here is the place where all these beautiful and beneficent agencies would be best appreciated by the children and youth, who would accept them as eagerly as the children of New England, fifty years ago; springing to them as to a bounteous feast.

And is not the group of men and women already known who can bring the philosophy of social science down from heaven to abide upon earth, and put into simple statement, in leaflets or short readable tracts, the knowledge that makes for good living and true prosperity? The South is now drugged with the theories of professional politicians. Now the tariff, now the negro, now the railroad, now the distant millionnaire. is paraded up and down as the cause of "agricultural depression," the source of all southern woes. But let the social scientists "take an inning," and tell the people what wasteful housekeeping, bad cookery, unskilled labor, unfit dress, ignorance, superstition, shiftlessness, vulgarity, and vice have to do with the undeniable trials of these, with other multitudes of the less favored of our American people. A railroad conductor, with a big head on his shoulders, said to me: "All along this route of five hundred miles the people would read tons of leaflets, tracts, anything containing good, sound information and advice on common things. I could distribute all that anybody would give me."

But why go on? Here is a people, not inferior in capacity to any upon earth, of excellent original stock, appearing for the first time as a controlling element in sixteen great states of the Republic, in whose hands is the destiny of other millions just introduced to American citizenship. On them will depend the outcome of southern affairs for the coming generation more than upon all the rest of the country. What an appeal to the patriotism, the justice, the Christian spirit, of the whole American people! But alas for the sin, the shame, and the discouragement which stand between such a people and all that come to them in friendly co-operation! I live all summer in sight of money enough thrown to the dogs and to the devil to place on the ground, in any of these states, the agencies which their own noblest people are all ready to use for the public good. When the great Protestant churches, that still work at cross-purposes along the border, learn the wisdom of Christian statesmanship, close up their ranks, and pour a stream of northern money into this, the most fruitful mission field on earth, there will be more hope of the coming of the kingdom for which their prayers go up day and night before the Lord.

The conviction forces itself upon a careful observer of these states that the time has passed when any set of leaders, any political or ecclesiastical party, can solve the difficult problems now set before them. It is doubtful if the foremost men, North and South, who were once arrayed as enemies in war, can ever "see eye to eye," or repose that confidence in each other without which all dealing with matters so delicate involves an ever-recurring exasperation. Napoleon said, "When a great thing is to be done in public affairs, keep away from the leaders, and go to the people." "The people" that will finally bring peace, confidence, reconciliation, through all our borders are the children and youth now being trained all over the land for the grandest effort of Christian administration that ever confronted a generation of men. And the southern children on whom we are to largely depend, thirty years hence, for this glorious work of reconstruction and reconciliation are the boys and girls of this rising Third Estate and the negroes, — the youthful millions that now swarm this land of the South. The best we can do is to hold things as good as they are, with the hope of making some little headway year by year against sectional prejudice, provincialism, and all the enemies of the new Republic. But greater than all other things is the work to which we are called, — the education of the head, the hand, and the heart of the twenty millions of Young America. Then, as Thomas Jefferson said, "If we educate the children aright, our descendants will be wiser than we, and many things impossible to us will be easy to them."

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